Nawaz's visit to AJK will yield positive results: Sultan

By Our Correspondent

MUZAFFARABAD, Dec 31: AJK Prime Minister, Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry, said here on Thursday that Pakistan Premier Nawaz Sharif had great interest in the development and progress of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and his (Sharif's) Wednesday's visit to Muzaffarabad would yield positive results, in this regard.

According to an official handout, he said this while addressing the members of his cabinet and other party leaders at the PM House here. Sultan Mahmood claimed that Mr Sharif had agreed to meet the AJK's budget deficit besides providing special grant for uplift of Azad Kashmir.

The AJK PM had presented a number of demands to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif during the later's brief visit to Muzaffarabad to attend the AJK Council meeting on Wednesday.

These demands included provision of Rs1 billion as special grant to overcome AJK's budget deficit provision of Sui gas to Muzaffarabad and Mirpur; construction of airport in Mirpur; construction of RCC bridges on river Jhelum at Dhan Gali and Azad Patan; repair and widening of the major AJK roads, linking the state to Pakistan through National Highway Authority; establishment of science and technology institute and national computer centre in Mirpur and Muzaffarabad, respectively; construction of sports complex in Muzaffarabad; setting up of a national park in Pir Chinasi near Muzaffarabad, package for promotion of tourism and initiation of the "Tameer-e-Watan" programme in Azad Kashmir.

Sultan Mahmood said the response of Mr Sharif regarding these demands was very positive and sympathetic. He said that he had also taken up the issue of the royalty of the Mangla Dam and the income of the Jammu Kashmir state property with Mr Sharif.

He said soon he would be meeting with Premier Sharif in Islamabad to discuss in detail these vital issues.

The AJK PM told his colleagues that he had also discussed strategy to effectively raise and project the just cause of the Kashmiris at the international level. He said he had suggested that Kashmir desks be established in all important foreign missions of Pakistan and the Kashmiris should be appointed to run these desks.

Sultan Mahmood said he also expressed gratitude on behalf of the Kashmiris for the strong and valuable support of Pakistan to their just cause.